

ULTRAVIOLET RADIATION ADDED TO LIST OF HUMAN CARCINOGENS

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The United States federal government has officially identified ultraviolet radiation (UVR) as a cause of cancer. The latest Report on Carcinogens, listed UVR from both sunshine and artificial tanning machines as “known human carcinogen.” The Report points to the overwhelming evidence connecting UVR to cancers in the skin.

Tanning from any source, sun or tanning beds, not only increases skin cancer risk, but it also accelerates skin aging --wrinkles, sagging skin, and ugly, irregular brown pigmentation of the skin. Experts estimate that 50-80% of lifetime sun damage occurs before age 18. For this reason, sun protection and sun avoidance in children is a must. Always seeking the perfect tan, teens are the most difficult population to convince of the dangers of skin cancer and skin aging from the sun. What can you do to protect them? Avoiding the sun and artificial tanning machines is the best way to decrease the risk of skin cancer and slow the aging of the skin from UVR. Obviously, no one can avoid the sun completely so here are some guidelines to minimize the damage from the sun.

- Try to stay out of the sun from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.
- Look for sunscreen bottles that say UVA and UVB coverage, SPF 15 or higher.
- Apply the sunscreen everyday, even when it is cloudy. If you are going to be in the sun for a long time, reapply sunscreen 20-30 minutes after going outside, then reapply every 90 minutes, more often if swimming or sweating.
- Don't forget the lip balm with sunscreen.
- Wear protective clothing such as a broad-brimmed hat, long pants and long sleeved shirts.
- Wear sunglasses that provide 100% UV protection.
- Remember that the sand, water and snow reflect the sun. (You can get burned even under an umbrella at the beach and so can your baby.)

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